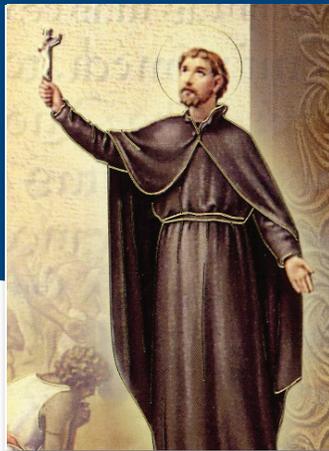


Novena of Grace Day 2



O most kind and loving Saint Francis Xavier, in union with you I adore the most divine majesty. The memory of the favors with which God blessed you during life, and of your glory after death, fills me with joy. And I unite with you in offering to him my humble tribute of thanksgiving and praise. I implore of you to secure for me, through your powerful intercession, the all-important blessing of living and dying in a state of grace. I also ask you to obtain the favor I ask in this novena. (*Mention your petitions.*) But if what I ask is not for the greater glory of God, or the good of my soul, obtain for me what is most conducive to both. Amen.

Our Father. Hail Mary. Glory Be.

V. Pray for us, Saint Francis Xavier **R.** That we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ

O God, who was pleased to gather to your Church the peoples of the East by the preaching and miracles of Saint Francis Xavier, mercifully grant that we, who honour his glorious merits, may also imitate the example of his virtues, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Reflections from Jesuits who share the name Francis

Truth be told the name Francis my parents gave me was after the saintly Assisi fellow rather than Xavier from Navarre. It was my Jesuit family who introduced me to the Xavier Francis over fifty years ago and he has the immeasurably greater impact on me.

His formative influence on me began in 1964 when, as a postulant in our novitiate in Wernersville, I spotted the beckoning statue of missionary Francis Xavier. He stood then and now off a path leading to the grove with a cross held high in his left hand while the other was used, as I imagined, for tirelessly baptizing countless numbers on the margins of the unknown world.

Statuesque Francis Xavier stoked my desire to be a missionary too. I've since prayed innumerable novenas to

him which have kept kindled my missionary spirit. Suffice to say I am grateful for having spent three years of my Jesuit life in Latin America and two decades and counting in the home mission lands of the Carolinas and Georgia.

I feel like our present Pontiff whose public name is of Francis of Assisi but whose passion for the people on the margins is from Francis Xavier. I am looking forward again this year to praying the Novena to Francis Xavier. Through his intercession I shall ask that Our Lord blesses and gives profit to our efforts to bring countless numbers into our Church throughout this missionary Diocese of Savannah lying as it does at the southern margin of the Northeast Providence of the Society of Jesus.

Fr. Francis Gillespie, SJ